

BRITISH ARCHÆOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION.

At the meeting held on Wednesday, Nov. 24, a paper was read by Mr. Planché entitled, "Archæological Gleanings at Lincoln and Southwell," in which some singularly interesting pieces of painted glass and sculpture, hitherto unnoticed by antiquaries, were described and commented upon. One in particular, the sculptures on the capital of a column in Southwell Minster, was considered by Mr. Planché as literally to settle the long-disputed question of the date of the earlier portion of that magnificent edifice. It represented an ecclesiastic of rank—a bishop or archbishop—standing within a building, on the outside of which was the figure of some saint bowing before the Trinity, behind whom stood a female with a lily in her hand, and having a child or smaller personage near her. Mr. Planché suggests that the subject of this sculpture was the consecration of the second church at Southwell by Archbishop Thomas, and that the saint was intended to personify Paulinus, the founder of the first church, soliciting the protection of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for the new or restored edifice. The female with the lily being the Virgin Mary, to whom the church is dedicated, and the child probably a repetition of the Saviour as an infant. In illustration of his paper, Mr. Planché exhibited drawings and tracings of some figures at Lincoln: an oak-tree with bows from the windows of the chapter-house at Southwell, and a crowned head forming a corbel to a doorway in the south aisle of that minster, which exhibited remarkably early and interesting examples of the collar of SS.

THE EDINBURGH SLATERS.*

The slaters were united, along with the glaziers, to the incorporation of wrights and masons in 1703. The wages of the workmen at that time were equivalent to 1s. sterling per day. Fifty years ago they had risen to double that amount; and during the war to 20s. 25s. and even to 30s. per week. Previous to 1820 they were as low as 15s. and 16s.; but during the reign of the building mania they varied from 18s. to 25s. per week. They subsequently fell once more to 16s. and 18s. and continued at these rates for a period of ten years.

In 1832 the slaters established a union. In 1837 they perpetrated a strike. It lasted some two months, when the masters yielded, and the wages rose to 1l. per week. In the interim the men had opened a yard in the Castle-road, and commenced business on their own account. A curious fact occurs to us in connection with this enterprise. It was not the old hands, nor the best hands, nor even the most outrageous unionists, that reaped the benefit of the speculation, or, in other words, received the most wages; but chiefly it was those men who could be least depended upon, who cared not a fig for the union, or for their masters, but who were ready to sell their labour and their principles to whichever party was best prepared to pay for them. This was "moral force" with a vengeance. This was a specimen of the manner in which the obnoxious principles of a trades' union invariably react on the interests and schemes of its most devoted partisans.

There have been several partial strikes since that time, and all of them successful on the part of the workmen. At present the wages are 21s. per week throughout the year, since, notwithstanding that the hours are necessarily shorter in winter, the wages are not reduced. It is proper to state, however, that these wages are seldom realised. The loss of time in summer with rain, and in winter with frost, sadly depreciates the amount. We have had the average given to us as high as 17s. and as low as 13s.; but probably the mean difference of these sums will represent the true average wages per week. There are upwards of 100 slaters in Edinburgh and Leith, including apprentices, who serve five years. Probably one half of that number were bred in the country.

Notwithstanding the continual danger and

the uncertain nature of the trade, it is very remarkable how it runs in families. We have been more than astonished at the number of slaters we have met whose fathers belonged to the same occupation.

Setting aside its danger, the trade is by no means unhealthy. There is no disease peculiar to it, as in the case of masons. The slaters as a class have been dissipated and irregular in their habits. It is true that no trade in connection with building more requires men of steady and temperate habits than that of the slaters; but it is equally true that no trade is, or rather was, more given to dissipation. "Thirty years ago the slaters were a set of drunken rascals, and they are little better to-day," are the words of one of the oldest master slaters in Edinburgh. The character of the men has greatly improved. Temperance has made good progress among them. They have also established a library in connection with their association, which we are glad to see is flourishing, and which, undoubtedly, is one of the very best purposes to which they could apply their union funds. Their educational standard is also improved, although, we may add, there is yet room enough and to spare for greater advancement.

Besides the roofing of houses, the slater occasionally rough-casts and paints the walls, repairs the chimney-pots, and puts on cans. A large proportion of them are also firemen. For these duties they are peculiarly adapted, from their habit of climbing in dangerous situations.

TEMPLE BAR.

You are not, I hope, Mr. Editor, a Temple-Bar-rister, but will cordially join in recommending the removal of that bar which now serves only to keep up an invidious distinction between those who reside east and west of it. Be it the work of Wren or not, and that it is his has been questioned, as a piece of architecture it is positively ugly, and exhibits almost as many solecisms in taste and design as it was possible to put together within the same compass. On the score of antiquity, it possesses as little claim to mercy as on that of artistic merit. There is nothing at all venerable about it: it is merely what, in speaking of a person, we should term an old-fashioned quiz; and, by the bye, ere I forget it, I may observe, *à propos* to it, that a friend of mine, perhaps you will say he is number one, is wont to make use of the epithet, *Temple-barbarous*, to express the superlative degree of barbarousness. Were it, however, as beautiful as it is now the contrary, it is at all events a positive inconvenience and obstruction, and bars the way to the highly-desirable improvements which, if not immediately at first, would, no doubt, follow its removal. Whereas, so long as it is suffered to remain, it is impossible to widen the street on either side of the way, just at that particular point where a considerable increase of breadth is highly desirable.

What occasion there is for having any formal and visible boundary between the City and Westminster any more than between the several separate districts of the metropolis, it is difficult to understand; more especially as its conspicuousness renders it all the more an eye-sore. If the corporation regard it as their palladium, let them by all means take it to themselves, and plant it in front of that marvel of taste—the façade of their own Guildhall.

Z.

IMPROVEMENTS IN PARIS.—We learn that public works are being carried on with great activity. The question of the continuation of the arcades in the new Rue de Rivoli has been under discussion. Numerous proprietors of houses have declared themselves in favour of continuing them throughout the whole line of the new street, while others have opposed it, and have even disputed the right of the city to enforce a style of architecture, as it did not come under the exact meaning of a measure of public utility. After discussing the pros and cons at some length, the commission ultimately decided that the arcade should be continued.

METROPOLITAN SEWERS COMMISSION.

APPOINTMENT OF SURVEYOR.

At a special Court of Sewers, held on Friday, the 26th ult. in Greek-street, Soho, tenders for works in Leam-road and Eltham-road were received from Mr. Hill and Mr. Detbach, contractors. The tender of the former amounted to 2,673l. and that of the latter to 2,600l. while the estimate of the surveyor of the commission was only 2,000l. The discrepancy attracted the attention of the Court, who ordered the insertion of fresh advertisements, inviting further tenders.

Upon the recommendation of the committee, Mr. Joseph William Bazelgette was appointed general surveyor of works under the commission, the chairman, at the same time, passing an eulogium upon Mr. Bazelgette, who, he stated, had produced before the committee flattering testimonials from Mr. Robert Stephenson and Sir William Cubitt, and had been selected by the committee out of thirty-three competitors. The commissioners had felt this to be a most important appointment, and their judgment had not been at all swayed by the successful candidate being an officer of the commission.*

In the House of Commons, on the 30th, Sir B. Hall said, by an Act of last session, power was given to the Metropolitan Commissioners of Sewers to levy a rate of 6d. in the pound, to carry out improvements in connection with this department. This Act would terminate with the close of the present session of Parliament, and he wanted to know, first, if it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill in the present session of Parliament to continue the present Act? and next, if such was their intention, whether the Bill would be brought in at such a period of the session as would afford to the inhabitants of the metropolis an opportunity of discussing its provisions?

Lord J. Manners said that the hon. baronet had described very accurately the object of the Act referred to. With regard to the questions put by the hon. baronet in connection with this subject, he had to answer both of them in the affirmative.

CALCULATIONS FOR THE CITY RAILWAY TERMINUS.

The committee to whom Mr. Pearson's scheme was referred have brought up their report to a public meeting. In it they say,—

"We find that the capital required to construct the railway and stations thus limited, to fill up the valley of the Fleet, and effect the great street communications from east to west, between Battle-bridge and Holborn, would, in round numbers, amount to 1,000,000l.

The balance of the cost of the ground to be cleared for the execution of so much of the project as lies north of the Holborn valley is estimated by Mr. Higgins and Mr. Bunning at 823,000l.; while Mr. Tite estimates it at 612,000l. and Mr. Stevens and Mr. T. M. Nelson value it at 480,000l. Of course it is impossible for us to determine between such extensive differences of opinion upon an avowedly difficult question between such able professional men: probably in this, as in many other questions, experience may show that safety of calculation would place the sum midway between the two extremes, which will leave the amount about where Mr. Tite places it, namely, 612,000l.

Mr. Stevens reports to the committee that the cost of constructing the railway stations and street improvements north of Holborn valley will amount to one-half of the sum which these items would cost if the whole project is carried at once; and from the concurrent evidence of all parties we gather, that the cost both of land purchases and construction of the first section of the project will amount as nearly as possible to one-half of the whole undertaking. It also appears to us, that if, in conformity with the Railway Commissioners' report, the total cost of the combined operations of railroad undertaking and street improve-

* We understand that four were selected as worthy of especial consideration, viz. Mr. Bazelgette, Mr. John Billing, Mr. Greenham, and Mr. Fothermy.

* Condensed from the *Edinburgh News*.